

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Fourth Quarter 2016: *The Book of Job*

Lesson 8 “Innocent Blood”

Read for this week’s study

Job 10; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:10–20; Job 15:14–16; Job 1:18–20; Matthew 6:34.

Memory Text

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Job’s Protest
- III. Innocent Blood?
- IV. Unfair Fates
- V. Sufficient for the Day . . .
- VI. Things Not Seen
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Hebrews 11:1. What is the role of evidence in relation to things that cannot be seen, heard or touched? How do we find answers to make sense of that which seems to make no sense at all? From the things that we do see how can we learn to trust God about the things we don’t see? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Job 10. What is Job saying to God and why does it make so much sense under his circumstances? How did Job know that he wasn’t deserving of the suffering he experienced? Would it have helped if Job had known that he was suffering precisely because he was faithful rather than unfaithful? What can and should one say to a person who believes that he or she is suffering unjustly? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. What do the following texts reveal about the reality of sin (1 Kings 8:46; Psalm 51:4-5; Proverbs 20:9; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:9-20)? If everyone in the world today has sinned, what sense does it have to talk about “innocent civilians?” If all of us truly deserve what Job experienced, perhaps the question should be why we live so well most of the time. Why, then, are people offended at the grace of God? (Monday’s lesson)
4. Read Job 15:14-16. What truth is Eliphaz attempting to present to Job? Does suffering always lead to good of some sort eventually? (Tuesday’s lesson)

5. Read the following verses and think about the immediate fate of those depicted in the texts. Then ask yourself the question: How fair was life treating them (Genesis 4:8; Exodus 12:29-30; 2 Samuel 11:17; Job 1:18-20; Jeremiah 38:6; Matthew 14:10; Hebrews 11:35-38)? Read Matthew 6:34. How does this acknowledgement of the reality of evil help in relating to it? How has life's unfairness impacted your life? What matters more, your experience in life or the way you have responded to those experiences? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Read Proverbs 3:5-8. Though it is a familiar text, what crucial message can help us relate to the topic of suffering? How do you reconcile this passage with the horrors outlined in the previous day's lesson? (Thursday's lesson)
7. Friday's lesson quotes Albert Camus who argued that the most fundamental question of philosophy is whether or not life is worth living. To what degree does the larger view of the universe unveiled in Job help to answer this fundamental question? To what degree does it not? Does belief in God make the problem of suffering better or worse? (Friday's lesson)
8. Does the good in the world outweigh the evil? How would one know? Even if the good in the world outweighed all the evil, would that have been any help to Job in the midst of his suffering? Does the good outweigh the evil when one animal is eating another? (Friday's lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Besides, there is no such difference between belief and faith in the Bible. There is only one word. If you'll forgive the Greek, it's *pistis* : p-i-s-t-i-s. And we must remember that conversation between the jailer and Paul was in Greek. And that's the reason for these different versions on the Bible Reference Sheet. Acts 16:30, 31. First from the *King James*, the verse we've all memorized: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'" (KJV)

But you'll notice in the *New English Bible*; "Put your trust in the Lord Jesus. . . ." (NEB) It's the same word. This word *pistis* can mean belief, faith, trust, confidence. And the versions vary, this just for variety. Then the *Berkeley* version has; "Have faith in the Lord Jesus. . . ." (Berkeley)

They are all exactly the same. I suppose we're most familiar with the word "faith." And as Christians we talk about it a great deal. But what is this faith? What do we mean when we say to a person "Have faith", or "You should have more faith." Or, "We're saved by faith." Or, "Righteousness by faith." Faith is so variously used these days that we almost need another word. A boxer will succeed in beating his opponent into a state of insensibility, and when asked by the reporters to what he attributes his surprising success, he will say, "My faith." But the most notorious definition (I'm sure you may have heard) is the one given by a small schoolboy.

He said, "Faith is believin' what you know ain't so." You see, if you're prepared to believe what "you know ain't so," that's real faith.

Now, we wouldn't go that far. But might we say, "Faith is believing something for which you have insufficient evidence." Because if you had sufficient evidence, you wouldn't say, "I accept that by faith," you would say, "I know." Does that mean the more we come to know God, the less faith we'll have? And someday we'll stand in his presence and say, "God, I see you now. And that's the end of my faith. I'll never trust you again, because now I know you." Or does the famous verse in Hebrews 11:1 help us? What verse has been more memorized than this? Hebrews 11:1, on the Bible Reference Sheet. First the familiar wording of the *King James*: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (KJV)

Does it help to know that faith is a substance? Or that faith is the evidence of things not seen? That would suggest that if you have faith in something, that's evidence that it really is so. So if you have faith that there's a man in the moon that proves there must be one? That doesn't make sense! But do we sometimes use faith this way? Does Hebrews 11 encourage us to do so? Look at those two words, translated "substance" and "evidence." Take evidence first: the Greek word is *elegchos*. It's a noun that comes from a verb that's used in the work of the Holy Spirit. That when the Spirit comes, he will convince you. He will convict you. He will settle you into the truth. A better translation would be "conviction." Faith is conviction.

Then the other word, "substance." Well, this is a word we don't often use in English. Hypostasis comes from the Greek *hupostasis*. That doesn't help much to know that faith is a *hupostasis*, does it? But does it help to know that faith is a substance? The Greek word *hupostasis*, not to go into it too much, means "that which stands under," and that's where "sub" "stance" came from. Which is very good Latin but not very good English.

Not until the turn of the century did scholars really discover what this word means. As archeologists were digging in the sands of Egypt, looking for manuscripts primarily, they even found crocodiles sometimes, stuffed with manuscripts. Well, among these manuscripts they found some that were title deeds to property, business agreements made, covenants; and the title of these documents was this very word: *hupostasis*. And it dawned on some of them that what the apostle was saying here is that faith is, as it were, an agreement, a covenant. God has much to offer us. But first he presents himself. Do we find him worthy of our trust? Then he has many things he would like to do with us. And if we decide we can trust him, and that we would like to do business with him, (to speak of this in business terms) then that trusting relationship is *faith*.

So how should we translate it? Look at the next three: "Now faith is the title-deed of things hoped for. . . ." (Montgomery) That's where it came from. It is the word for a title-deed. And

the one who translated that is Mrs. Montgomery, one of the few women who has translated the Bible, in 1924. I'm surprised more women don't use that version; it's a good one.

"Now faith means that we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see." (Moffatt) Or, "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." (NIV)

Can you see the idea coming through of conviction, certainty? That's the meaning of faith. Now it helps very much to look at the context of Hebrews 11:1, such as the verses right before it, and remember there were no chapter divisions in the early days. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #3, "All God Asks is Trust" recorded January, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/3MMCAG>*

But then, if we trusted God enough, even respected and revered him enough to take the time to listen, we might hear God provoke the questions himself. You think about how God stirred his friend Abraham as he was on his way down to Sodom and Gomorrah to consume those cities. He said, "I wouldn't do this without first telling my friend, Abraham." Then you remember Abraham's reply, and how he dared to reason with his God. Look at Genesis 18:23, 25. This is just a part of the whole conversation: "Then Abraham drew near, and said, 'Wilt thou indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked? Far be that from thee! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?'" (RSV)

Have you ever dared say that to God? Was God offended? No, look at James 2:23, next on the list: "Abraham was called God's friend." (GNB)

And that's just one of the places in the Bible where he is spoken of in this way. You remember how God spoke to Moses, his friend. He said, "I am sick and tired of these people. Step aside and let me destroy them." But look at the words in Numbers 14:11-13, 16:

And the Lord said to Moses, "I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." But Moses said to the Lord, "Then the Egyptians will hear of it. . . . Then the nations who have heard thy fame will say, 'Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore to give to them, therefore he has slain them in the wilderness.'" (RSV)

Moses showed his jealousy for God's reputation. Was God offended by this? No, look at Exodus 33:11: "The Lord would speak with Moses face-to-face, just as a man speaks with a friend." (GNB)

Now, one would need to know God very well to talk to God like this. And surely Moses and Abraham knew God well. You recall how even Peter once dared to say "No" to God. He did it

three times. Look at Acts 10:13, 14. You remember the story of the sheet that came down three times with all the forbidden things inside. And now, reading from Acts 10:13, 14: "There came a voice to him, 'Rise, Peter, kill and eat.' But Peter said, 'No, Lord.'" (RSV)

"No, Lord", the second time. I venture there was quite a quiver in his voice when for the third time he said, "No, Lord. I can't do it." Did God rebuke Peter for doing that? This is the kind of relationship that God desires to have with us, his children. When we have such a relationship, prayer simply cannot be a trite formality, but honest conversation about things that matter the most to us. Above all, the conversation must be honest, or it isn't real friendship after all. That would mean that if there's a Brother Jones working near you who is irritating you to death, and that night you kneel and say, "Oh Lord, do bless Brother Jones. Thou knowest how I love him." Then listen closely and you might hear God say, "That's very sweet. But, why don't you tell me the truth? You hate the ground he walks on. And if you would only just admit it, maybe I could begin to help you. But so long as you pretend, there is not much I can do."

When David was depressed, he said so. Look for example in Psalm 77:7-10. I could have chosen many other passages, as you know:

Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? Has God forgotten to be gracious? . . .
And I say, "It is my grief that the right hand of the Most High has changed." (RSV)

He said that to God in prayer. Of course, that is only the first half of the psalm. You know you must read on and read it all. You will find in the end of the seventy-seventh Psalm how David resolved his depression. But if David wanted vengeance, he wouldn't say, "Lord, thou knowest how I love Brother Isaac and I hope his crops will flourish this year," when really David wished that the blood of Brother Isaac would flow down the street and would water the furrows of his field and the locusts would consume his crops.

David would kneel and say, "Lord, thou knowest my thoughts anyway, so why should I pretend?" Look at Psalm 139:19, 21-24:

O that thou wouldst slay the wicked, O God, do I not hate them that hate thee, O Lord? And do I not loathe them that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them my enemies. [But without pausing, he goes right on] Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (RSV)

You see, he invited healing and he knew he needed a new heart and a right spirit; truth in the inner man. So he first would present himself honestly to God. He said, "You know all my thoughts anyway. So, why should I hide? You know how I feel. So search me and may my thoughts and the meditations and the words of my mouth be acceptable to you."

If you should watch a loved one die, and you should cry, “Why God? Why?” Would God be offended? Or would the God you know reach down and put an arm around your shoulder and say, “I understand how you feel. You wouldn’t be human if you didn’t feel that way. Someday I’ll make it plain to you. I wish I could right now. But please trust me, and trust me enough to be willing to wait.”

But, you see, we have to know God well before those emergencies arise, so that we can trust him and pray to him like this. That’s why Paul said we need the Holy Spirit of truth to be able to trust and pray like this. In Romans 8:26, that familiar verse: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought.” (RSV) {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #15, “Talking to God as a Friend” recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/15MMCAG>*

Lou: One of our congregation went out of her way to type up a question that she has had for a number of years. She says this, “Can you give a reason why a loving God would allow a good Christian woman to be murdered? She was a good help in her small church. She was the treasurer of her church. The last Sabbath of her life they had a consecration service at the church. She dedicated herself anew to God, and she was murdered that afternoon at her house. She was the treasurer, and she had money at her house, and apparently that was the reason that someone broke in and she was killed.” And this individual says, “The reason I know about this is that she was my sister.”

Graham: Again, happy the person who knows God very well at a time like this. It doesn’t mean that we would know the answer. I don’t think Job ever found out why those things happened to him that did. But all he knew was that those theologians were wrong. And those theologians came to Job and said, “You cannot be asking God about this.” I mean, Job was crying to God with intense feeling and saying, “God, how can you do this to me? I’ve been your good friend all this time, and now you won’t even speak to me. You won’t explain this.” And the theologians were going on with their very legalistic explanation. Finally he said, “I wish you brethren would be quiet. I appreciate your coming, but you’re not helping me at all.” None of their explanations were good. He said, “If only I could talk to God, I’m sure I could clear this up.” And eventually the boldness of his inquires of God reached such a level that those three men were worried for their friend that God would surely zap him on the spot for daring to inquire. And God broke in and said, “Job, you have said of me what is right.”

So if a person is wrestling with this, we may not find out; I’m sure we won’t find out the answer to every such absolutely unfair thing that happens on this planet during this emergency. But

some things we know for sure; the kind of person God is, and that he welcomes us to lodge our inquires with feeling, and hopefully we will trust him enough to wait for the answer.

Lou: Acquainted well enough to trust when we don't know how to answer all these things.

Graham: That's the thing. And I'd like to think that that sister was such a saint; don't worry about her. She will arise in the resurrection and say, "What am I doing here?" She will have no complaints. She'll be looking for her sister. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #6 with Lou Venden, "Evaluating the Evidence" recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/6MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

Into the experience of all there come times of keen disappointment and utter discouragement—days when sorrow is the portion, and it is hard to believe that God is still the kind benefactor of His earthborn children; days when troubles harass the soul, till death seems preferable to life. It is then that many lose their hold on God and are brought into the slavery of doubt, the bondage of unbelief. Could we at such times discern with spiritual insight the meaning of God's providences we should see angels seeking to save us from ourselves, striving to plant our feet upon a foundation more firm than the everlasting hills, and new faith, new life, would spring into being. {PK 162.1}

The enemy cannot overcome the humble learner of Christ, the one who walks prayerfully before the Lord. Christ interposes Himself as a shelter, a retreat, from the assaults of the wicked one. The promise is given, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." . . . {ML 316.2}

There is no power in the whole satanic force that can disable the soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God. {ML 316.3}

Christ is our tower of strength, and Satan can have no power over the soul that walks with God in humility of mind. The promise, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." In Christ there is perfect and complete help for every tempted soul. Dangers beset every path, but the whole universe of heaven is standing on guard, that none may be tempted above that which he is able to bear. Some have strong traits of character, that will need to be constantly repressed. If kept under the control of the Spirit of God, these traits will be a blessing; but if not, they will prove a curse. . . . If we will give ourselves unselfishly to the work, never swerving in the least from principle, the Lord will throw about us the everlasting arms, and will prove a mighty helper. If we will look to Jesus as the One in whom we may trust, He will never fail us in any emergency. {ML 316.4}

Those who closely connect with God may not be prosperous in the things of this life; they may often be sorely tried and afflicted. Joseph was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue and integrity. David, that chosen messenger of God, was hunted like a beast of prey by his wicked enemies. Daniel was cast into a den of lions because he was true and unyielding in his allegiance to God. Job was deprived of his worldly possessions and so afflicted in body that he was abhorred by his relatives and friends, yet he preserved his integrity and faithfulness to God. Jeremiah would speak the words which God had put into his mouth, and his plain testimony so enraged the king and princes that he was cast into a loathsome pit. Stephen was stoned because he would preach Christ and Him crucified. Paul was imprisoned, beaten with rods, stoned, and finally put to death because he was a faithful messenger to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. The beloved John was banished to the Isle of Patmos “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” {4T 525.1}

These examples of human steadfastness, in the might of divine power, are a witness to the world of the faithfulness of God’s promises—of His abiding presence and sustaining grace. As the world looks upon these humble men, it cannot discern their moral value with God. It is a work of faith to calmly repose in God in the darkest hour—however severely tried and tempest-tossed, to feel that our Father is at the helm. The eye of faith alone can look beyond the things of time and sense to estimate the worth of eternal riches. {4T 525.2}

It is true that disappointments will come; tribulation we must expect; but we are to commit everything, great and small, to God. He does not become perplexed by the multiplicity of our grievances, nor overpowered by the weight of our burdens. His watchcare extends to every household, and encircles every individual; He is concerned in all our business and our sorrows. He marks every tear; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. All the afflictions and trials that befall us here are permitted, to work out His purposes of love toward us—“that we might be partakers of His holiness,” and thus become participants in that fullness of joy which is found in His presence. {ML 292.5}

That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. . . . The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. . . . The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. {ST, December 30, 1889 par. 4}

From the beginning it has been Satan’s studied plan to cause men to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. Hence he has sought to misrepresent the character of God, to lead men

to cherish a false conception of Him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself,—as arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving,—that He might be feared, shunned, and even hated by men. Satan hoped to so confuse the minds of those whom he had deceived that they would put God out of their knowledge. {5T 738.1}

God could employ only such means as were consistent with truth and righteousness. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. He had sought to falsify the word of God and had misrepresented His plan of government, claiming that God was not just in imposing laws upon the angels; that in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, He was seeking merely the exaltation of Himself. It was therefore necessary to demonstrate before the inhabitants of heaven, and of all the worlds, that God's government is just, His law perfect. Satan had made it appear that he himself was seeking to promote the good of the universe. The true character of the usurper and his real object must be understood by all. He must have time to manifest himself by his wicked works. {PP 42.1}

The discord which his own course had caused in heaven, Satan charged upon the government of God. All evil he declared to be the result of the divine administration. He claimed that it was his own object to improve upon the statutes of Jehovah. Therefore God permitted him to demonstrate the nature of his claims, to show the working out of his proposed changes in the divine law. His own work must condemn him. Satan had claimed from the first that he was not in rebellion. The whole universe must see the deceiver unmasked. {PP 42.2}

Even when he was cast out of heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. Since only the service of love can be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence. The inhabitants of heaven and of the worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice of God in the destruction of Satan. Had he been immediately blotted out of existence, some would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages, he must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, and that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might be forever placed beyond all question. {PP 42.3}

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages—a perpetual testimony to the nature of sin and its terrible results. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy beings, to prevent them from being deceived as to

the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its penalty. {PP 42.4}

But even as a sinner, man was in a different position from that of Satan. Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God. {DA 761.5}

Even when it was decided that he could no longer remain in heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. Since the service of love can alone be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence. The inhabitants of heaven and of other worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice and mercy of God in the destruction of Satan. Had he been immediately blotted from existence, they would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. Evil must be permitted to come to maturity. For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages Satan must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might forever be placed beyond all question. {GC 498.3}

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages, a perpetual testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government and His law is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin and suffering its punishments. {GC 499.1}

It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not deceive us. He does not say to us, "Do not fear; there are no dangers in your path." He knows there are trials and dangers, and He deals with us plainly. He does not propose to take His people out of a world of sin and evil, but He points them to a never-failing refuge. His prayer for His disciples was, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." "In the world," He says, "ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 17:15; 16:33. {SC 122.3}